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LETTER DATED 24 JUNE 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BURUNDI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit the final declaration signed on 21 June 1998 in Arusha, Tanzania, by the Burundian parties to the comprehensive political negotiations, which officially opened on 15 June 1998.

A press release explaining the reservations of some parties to the negotiation is also attached.

Since 25 July 1996, the Government of Burundi has been making efforts to put an end to the civil war that has been waging in my country since October 1993 and to invite all the Burundian parties to the conflict to seek a peaceful, negotiated settlement among all the political partners, including the armed groups.

The Government's task has been to remove all the internal obstacles to a peace process based on negotiation among all the parties. The internal and external debate among Burundians, through a political partnership between the National Assembly and the Government, has just resulted in a common political platform and a constitutional act of transition.

The institutions arising from this partnership will lead the Burundian people as a whole in a profound quest for new, democratic institutions. This quest, which will include all the elements and all the actors of the country and will conduct comprehensive negotiations among all the parties, will culminate in the establishment of a democratic system that will meet all the requirements of the Burundian society, which is seriously wounded but remains determined to live in peace and security and resolved to pursue its development along with other nations.

The Burundian people therefore request the support of the international community, and of the United Nations in particular, to help them remove all the external obstacles to this peace process agreed on by all the parties, a process which, in the Burundian Government's view, is irreversible.

The conclusions of the first round of negotiations in Arusha under the international mediation of H.E. Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, are one more proof of the Burundians' determination to find peaceful and negotiated solutions to their political crisis.

The Government of Burundi trusts that the United Nations and the international community, committed as ever to maintaining international peace and security, will spare no effort to remove or avoid any external obstacle to the current Burundian peace process.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annexes distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gamaliel NDARUZANIYE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex I

Declaration by the participants to the peace negotiations on Burundi, involving all the parties to the Burundi conflict, done at Arusha on 21 June 1998

At the invitation of Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, the Facilitator of the peace negotiations on Burundi, we, the leaders/representatives of the parties to the conflict, namely, the Government of Burundi, National Assembly, Front pour la democratie au Burundi (FRODEBU), Union pour le progrès national (UPRONA), Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie (CNDD), Parti pour le redressement nationale (PARENA), Parti libéral (PL), Parti indépendant des travailleurs (PIT), Parti social democrate (PSD), Alliance burundo-africaine pour le salut (ABASA), INKINZO, AV-INTWARI, Parti pour la réconciliation du peuple (PRP), Parti du peuple (PP), Rassemblement du peuple burundais (RPB), Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu du Burundi (PALIPEHUTU) and Front de la libération nationale (FROLINA), in the presence of representatives of the following organizations of civil society: the Chamber of Commerce, the Women's Association and the Youth Organization,

Aware of our historic responsibility, we share the same conviction that we owe it to the Burundian people, both present and future generations, to create a climate of lasting peace in our country and to put an end to the constant cycle of violence and fratricide that has long afflicted Burundi,

Aware of the suffering of our people, we are determined to exercise, individually and collectively, responsible leadership with the aim of putting an end to this suffering and creating the conditions for peaceful coexistence on the basis of democratic values and security for all,

(i) We solemnly undertake to carry out serious negotiations until we find a just and lasting solution to this crisis in our country;

(ii) We undertake to settle the Burundi conflict by peaceful means and to put an end to all forms of violence;

(iii) Consequently, all the armed parties to the conflict declare a suspension of hostilities as from 20 July 1998 at the latest;

Pursuant to the above-mentioned decisions, we undertake, individually and collectively, to return to Arusha on 20 July 1998 to start the second session of our negotiations, which has been convened by the Facilitator;

We also agree that the questions to be submitted for negotiation shall be as follows:

(a) Nature of the Burundi conflict and problems of genocide and exclusion and their solutions;

(b) Democracy and good governance, institutional systems, constitutional systems, the question of justice and the effort to combat impunity, the judicial system, and administrative system and transitional institutions;

(c) Peace and security for all, the question of public security and defence forces, the cessation of hostilities, provisions for the permanent ceasefire;

(d) Rehabilitation and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons, reconstruction and economic and social development;

(e) Guarantees for the implementation of the agreement arising from the peace negotiations on Burundi.

Consequently, the parties have decided to set up the following committees:

1. Committee on the Nature of the Burundian Conflict, the Problems of Genocide and Exclusion and their Solutions;

2. Committee on Democracy and Good Governance;

3. Committee on Peace and Security for All;

4. Committee on Reconstruction and Economic Development;

5. Committee on Guarantees for the Implementation of the Agreement Arising from the Peace Negotiations on Burundi;

In order to ensure the smooth functioning of negotiations, the parties agree to adopt, in timely fashion, a document to be submitted by the Facilitator on the methodology, timetable, organization and administrative provisions and rules of procedure. These rules will address, inter alia, questions of participation, conduct of deliberations, code of conduct of participants, role of the various protagonists, organization of the secretariat, working languages, communications and logistics.

Lastly, we express our satisfaction at the progress that was made at the first session of our peace negotiations in Arusha. In that connection, we thank the heads of State and Government of the region, the representatives of the secretaries-general of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations for the encouragement and support which they offered at the opening ceremony of the peace negotiations. We should also like to express our thanks to the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the warm welcome and hospitality they offered to all the delegations.

We express our special appreciation and deep gratitude to the Facilitator, Mwalimu K. Nyerere, for his patience and commitment to the quest for a just and lasting peace in Burundi.

1. Government of Burundi

We have reservations on:

- the venue of the next session;

- the wording concerning the suspension of hostilities, which should refer only to armed factions.

(Signed) Ambrose NIYONSABA
Head of delegation

2. National Assembly

(Signed) Alphonse NAHINDAVYI-NDANGA
Head of delegation

3. Front pour la democratie au Burundi

(Signed) Jean MINANI
Head of delegation

4. Union pour le progrès national

Express reservations to

para. 1, para. 3 (iii), and para. 4, on the role of civil society, the suspension of hostilities and the venue of the next session.

(Signed) Libère BARARUNYERETSE
Head of delegation

5. Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie

(Signed) Leonard NYANGOMA
Head of delegation

6. Parti pour le redressement national

(Signed) Jean-Baptiste BAGAZA
Head of Delegation

7. Alliance burundo-africaine pour le salut

(Signed) Nsanze TERENCE
Head of Delegation

8. AV-INTWARI

(Signed) André NKUNDIKIJE
Head of delegation

With the following four express reservations:

(1) Para. 3 (iii) "armed factions";

(2) Venue of negotiations to be determined;

(3) "Genocide and security in Burundi (First Committee)

(4) Sixth Committee - Establishment of an environment favourable to negotiations (lifting of sanctions)

9. Front pour la libération nationale

(Signed) Joseph KARUMBA
Head of delegation

10. INKINZO

With the reservation that the following points should be reviewed:

- Civil society (participation in negotiations);

- Venue of the second session to be determined;

- Suspension of hostilities (para. 3 (iii)).

(Signed) Kamo PASCAL
Head of delegation

11. Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu du Burundi

(Signed) Antoine SEZOYA
Head of delegation

12. Parti indépendant des travailleurs

(Signed) Etienne NYAHOZA
Head of delegation

The PIT signs with the following express reservations:

(1) Armed factions;

(2) Venue of negotiations to be determined;

(3) Create a Sixth Committee: establishment of an environment favourable to negotiations (lifting of sanctions).

13. Parti libéral

(Signed) Gaetan NIKOBAMYE
Head of delegation

14. Parti du peuple

(Signed) Schadrack NIYONKURU
Head of delegation

15. Parti pour la réconciliation du peuple

Reservations on the role of civil society and the suspension of hostilities.

(Signed) Mathias HITIMANA
Head of delegation

16. Parti social democrate

(Signed) Godefroy HAKIZIMANA
Head of delegation

Express reservations to paragraphs 1, 3 and 4, on the role of civil society, the suspension of hostilities and the venue of the next meeting, including the lifting of sanctions to improve the atmosphere of the work.

17. Rassemblement du peuple burundais

(Signed) Balthazar BIGIRIMANA
Head of delegation

Annex II

Press release at the close of the first session of the inter-Burundian negotiations held in Arusha from 15 to 21 June 1998

Arusha, 21 June 1998

At the close of the first session of the inter-Burundian negotiations held in Arusha from 15 to 21 June 1998, the undersigned stated the following:

1. Through the consultations organized with each party by the Facilitator, agreement was reached on various points: (1) the universal commitment to resolve the Burundi conflict by peaceful means and end all forms of violence; (2) the commitment to resume talks in one month's time; (3) the setting of the agenda for the comprehensive negotiations; (4) the appointment of the committees which are to assume responsibility for the various agenda items.

2. Owing to lack of time, a consensus has not yet been reached on the following matters: (1) the venues for the next sessions; (2) the suspension of hostilities; and (3) the maintenance of civil society as one of the parties.

- Concerning the venues, we recommend that these should be decided in agreement with the Facilitator and the committee officials;

- Concerning the suspension of hostilities, we recommend that all parties should immediately refrain from all violence. We further recommend that, in the next sessions, the parties should agree upon the means of implementing this suspension of hostilities;

- Concerning civil society, we recommend that it should be mai.tained as one of the parties. It is the primary victim of this conflic , in particular as a result of the embargo and the violence; it has considerable influence in society, and its exclusion may hinder the acceptability of any agreements reached.

3. In conclusion, we are convinced that:

- A compromise on the points of disagreement would probably have been reached if enough time had been set aside in the negotiation for direct discussions between the Burundians that would have enabled them to reconcile their points of view;

- In itself, the meeting of all the parties in Arusha was successful. Moreover, the above-mentioned points of agreement provide a sufficient basis for embarking on the second phase of the negotiations;

- In any event, the undersigned parties solemnly reaffirm their commitment to conduct the negotiations within the agreed time limit.

DONE at Arusha on 21 June 1998.

SIGNATORIES:

1. For the Union pour le progrès national (UPRONA)

   (Signed) Libère BARARUNYERETSE

2. For the Parti pour la réconciliation du peuple (PRP)

   (Signed) Albert GIRUKWISHAKA

3. For INKINZO

   (Signed) Kamo PASCAL

4. For the Parti indépendant des travailleurs (PIT)

   (Signed) Etienne NYAHOZA

5. For the Parti social democrate (PSD)

   (Signed) Godefroy HAKIZIMANA

6. (Signed) André NKUNDIKIJE

   President of Av-Intware

7. (Signed) Joseph NTIDENDEREZA

   Secretary-General of the Parti libéral

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